Spread of Pneumonia

3132. SHRIMATI JAMANA DEVI BARUPAL:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have convened a strategy meeting involving high-level Health Officials to take stock of the situation in the wake of reports of an unknown form of Pneumonia spreading in some Asian countries and Canada;

(b) if so, what were the main points discussed in the meeting;

(c) whether Government have fully geared itself to meet an eventuality and all laboratories are in the full state of preparedness; and

(d) how many people have been affected due to this disease?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The main points of discussion were :

- Case definition of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), Epidemiology, Case management and Infection control measures.
- Preparedness in terms of strengthening of Airport Health Organisations, Screening of passengers, identification of hospitals and logistics.
- Identifying laboratories for testing of biological samples.
- Public health issues.
- Coordination with concerned Ministries and all Statc/UT Governments.

(c) Yes, Sir.

Keeping in view the implications of an epidemic, Government of India has taken necessary steps which include the following :

- WHO recommended case definition was adopted for India and circulated to all Air Port Health Organisations/Port Health Organizations, Central Government Hospitals, Ministry of Civil Aviation/Airport Authority of India and State/U.T. health authorities along with patient management protocols.
- National Institute of Communicable Diseases (NICD), Delhi has been designated as the nodal agency to investigate any suspected cases/ outbreak. A control room is functioning round the clock.

- A proforma to screen all persons disembarking in India for symptoms of suspected/probable SARS cases has been prepared and handed over to Immigration Bureau.
- The health care facilities at International Airports and Ports have been strengthened by deploying additional doctors and evolving a standard operating protocol. The health staff is monitoring passengers of flights and ships arriving in India to report any suspected case and to take further appropriate action.
- National Institute of Communicable Diseases, Delhi and National Institute of Virology, Pune have been identified as the nodal agencies for laboratory investigation of any suspected/probable case.
- Facilities for treatment of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome in isolation have also been arranged in the Central Government Hospitals as also in other Infectious Disease Hospitals.
- Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has held coordination meetings with concerned Ministries and with WHO.
- Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has obtained the required primers for preparing reagents to diagnose the viruses believed to be causing SARS.
- Media is being kept informed on the efforts made by the Government to prevent SARS from entering the country and to create public awareness.
- The situation is being monitored on day-to-day basis.

(d) As per World Health Organization's information a total of 3293 Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) cases have been reported till 16th April, 2003 with 159 deaths in 22 countries.

Unrecognised MD degrees by Medical Colleges

3133. SHRI DATTA MEGHE:
SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA :

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that reputed Medical Colleges in Delhi are doling out MD degrees that are neither recognized by MCI nor by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare;